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THE OWENS VALLEY DISPUTE

The Story of Owens Valley, Its Dealings With the City of Los Angeles and the Dynamiting Attacks Upon the City's Aqueduct

By DON J. KINSEY

(Editor's Note—This is the fifth of a series of short articles revealing the facts in connection with the Los Angeles-Owens Valley water controversy. This series published by the Los Angeles Bureau of Water, Power and Light).

Conceived primarily as a water supply system for a great and growing city, the aqueduct was destined to bestow upon both Owens Valley and Los Angeles the golden benefits of cheap hydro-electric power.

Early aqueduct surveys revealed the fact that this gigantic water carrier, when placed in operation, would present opportunities, at several points along its route, for the development of large quantities of water power. With its intake on Owens River twelve miles north of the town of Independence and approximately 4,000 feet above sea

level, the aqueduct would drop in its course to Los Angeles to an elevation of 800 feet at its terminus. This fall of 3,200 feet, far more than was required to carry the water to Los Angeles by gravity, immediately suggested hydro-power development possibilities to aqueduct engineers.



(In Oval E. F. Scattergood, Chief Electrical Engineer of Aqueduct Project, under whose direction L. A. Bureau of Power and Light was established.

level, the aqueduct would drop in its course to Los Angeles to an elevation of 800 feet at its terminus. This fall of 3,200 feet, far more than was required to carry the water to Los Angeles by gravity, immediately suggested hydro-power development possibilities to aqueduct engineers.

The same surveys that disclosed the hydro-power opportunities along the route of the aqueduct also indicated that the construction of the water line would necessitate the boring of many miles of hard rock tunnels and the excavation of millions of feet of earth for the huge conduits that were to carry the water to the southern city. Operation of the drills, dredges and shovels to be used in boring these tunnels and digging the conduits would require considerable quantities of power.

It was recognized that the cheapest and most efficient form of power for such purposes would be electricity. There was, however, no electricity developed and available for use in Owens Valley. Investigations soon disclosed that sufficient hydro-power to meet all aqueduct construction needs could be developed from several of the mountain creeks that emptied into Owens River along the line of the project.

In 1909, the City of Los Angeles retained E. F. Scattergood, then a consulting engineer in private practice, as chief electrical engineer of the aqueduct project. Under the direction of Mr. Scattergood two power plants were placed in operation along Division creek, two miles west of the aqueduct intake, and a third plant erected on Cottonwood creek, forty miles south of the intake.

The 3,000 horsepower of energy generated by these three plants was carried down the line of the aqueduct over 188 miles of transmission lines and used to operate tunnel drills, dredges, electric shovels, concrete mixing machinery, water pumps and electric locomotives. A portion of this energy also was used to operate the great Monolith cement plant built by the City near Mojave to supply the thousands of barrels of cement needed in the construction of the aqueduct.

When the aqueduct was completed, power from the City's three hydro-electric plants in Owens Valley was released for use by the industries, mines, ranches and townspeople in the Valley. To these original plants there was added in 1913 a fourth plant below Haiwee reservoir. In 1924 the Bureau of Power and Light erected a fifth power plant with a generating capacity of 4,000 horsepower, on Big Pine Creek, and in 1927 the Bureau replaced its first Haiwee plant by a much larger one capable of generating 6,000 horsepower of energy.

From the five power plants now operated by the City of Los Angeles in Owens Valley a total of 13,000 horsepower is generated. Because it is not economically feasible to carry this quantity of power over a 250-mile transmission line to Los Angeles, the energy is all retained in Owens Valley and made available for the development of that region. The City sells this electric energy to the people of the Valley at practically the same low rates charged by the Bureau of Power and Light in Los Angeles. These rates, it is interesting to

note, are much lower than the rates charged for electric service in similar agricultural communities.

While building and operating the Owens Valley electric system, Mr. Scattergood also gave his attention to the problem of utilizing the great power possibilities of the aqueduct itself. In accordance with plans worked out by Mr. Scattergood, five power plants, generating a total of 118,000 horsepower of hydro-electric energy, have been placed in operation along the line of the water carrier. These plants are situated along the southern end of the aqueduct and are designated as San Francisco No. 1, capacity 60,800 horsepower; San Francisco No. 2, capacity 41,800 horsepower; San Fernando, capacity 8,500 horsepower; Franklin Canyon, capacity 2,850 horsepower, and the

River plant, capacity 4,000 horsepower.

It was the development of large quantities of cheap power along the aqueduct that led to the organization, under the direction of Mr. Scattergood, of the Los Angeles Bureau of Power and Light, recognized today as the largest municipally-owned electric utility in the United States.

(To be continued)

Prices Are Cut on Atwater Kent Sets

One of the most sensational and startling announcements ever before made in the history of the radio industry was sprung at the national meeting of Atwater Kent distributors at Philadelphia when A. Atwater Kent, president of the Atwater Kent Manufacturing Co., announced a sweeping price reduction in all of his company's products.

So drastic was the reduction that it came almost like a bomb shell and plunged the meeting into an excited babel of noises, according to telegraphic advices to Ray Thomas, Inc., Southern California distributors of Atwater Kent.

After the distributors had recovered from their surprise Mr. Kent explained that the reductions were made possible because of the factory economies that had been put in operation and that he believed it was only just that the public should have a share in these savings. "It is only right that purchasers should share" he declared, "in the results of up-to-date manufacturing methods in a fair way."

everything. This is a tendency of the times. In our 15-acre factory our production engineers and experts, since the inception of radio, have been working out manufacturing economies which smaller factories, perhaps, could not accomplish. These advancements have not only enabled us to maintain, but to improve, the standard of our products.

"The new prices are in keeping with the long established Atwater Kent policy of sharing with the public the results of economies as fast as they are put into practical operation."

The new prices, which will go into effect immediately, executives of Ray Thomas, Inc. stated will now bring Atwater Kent receivers within the reach of everyone.

Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Bode of San Pedro, and Mr. and Mrs. H. O. Golding attended a Long Beach theatre Tuesday.

Mrs. R. M. Jones was given a surprise birthday dinner recently at the Globe Coffee Shop. The affair was arranged by Mr. Jones.

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